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ABSTRACT

The Staff Development Team of the Columbus City Schools (Nebraska), composed of three teachers and three administrators, emphasizes the need for long-range planning in its design of an inservice model for the school district. Emphasis was placed on identifying and addressing the unique needs of teachers within the school district. The model also emphasized flexibility and features a contiuum for learning from awareness to mastery. This paper describes the school district's demographics and special needs and also the initial development of the team and its model. An example is presented of the Mentor Program that illustrates how the team attempts to produce creative solutions to school district needs. (Author/CB)

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THE

STAFF DEVELOPMENT TEAM

A
Viable Option
For
Small School Districts

by

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December, 1987
National Staff Development Conference
Seattle, Washington

SP 029 592

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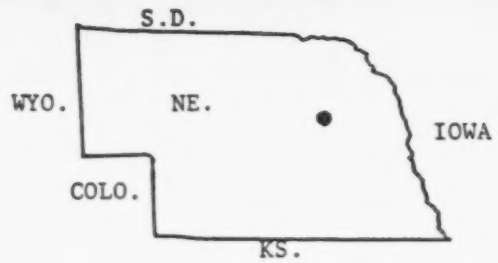

COLUMBUS, NEBRASKA

Columbus, the city of power, progress, and industry, is located at the confluence of the Platte and Loup Rivers. At the junction of Highways 30 and 81, Columbus is within easy reach of Omaha (80 miles), Kansas City (293 miles), or Denver (470 miles). With a population of 17,000, Columbus is large enough to offer a variety of activities, yet small enough to provide opportunities for person-to-person involvement.

In addition to being at the heart of a rich agricultural region, the city is home for 40 manufacturing plants, including Behlen Manufacturing, Dale Electronics, Becton-Dickinson, Co., Douglas and Lomason, and Saunders Archery. Columbus is also the headquarters of the Nebraska Public Power District. Columbus industries employ over 100 engineers, nearly all of whom are members of the largest chapter of professional engineers in the state.

The city is generously endowed with parks and recreation facilities. The Columbus Park District administers over 300 acres of parks, the largest of which is Pawnee Park, located on the banks of the Loup River. In addition to picnic and playground areas, Pawnee Park provides a 9-hole golf course, baseball and softball diamonds, tennis courts, a swimming pool, football stadium and track which is shared by both the parochial and public school systems.

Four miles north of Columbus are two lakes which are part of the Loup Power District electrical generating system. The power district provides over 60 acres of park facilities for camping, swimming, boating, and fishing.

Columbus is endowed with twenty-two friendly churches representing 11 denominations.

COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS

The Columbus Public Schools are governed by a six-member elected Board of Education which sets policies for the District. The Board appoints a Superintendent who is responsible for day-to-day administration of Board policy. The Columbus City Schools serve 3,200 children (K-12). The District is organized into eight K-6 elementary schools, one 7-9 junior high school, and one 10-12 high school. Plans are presently underway to create a 6-8 middle school and add grade nine to our high school.

The District employs approximately 200 certified teachers. The present administrative team is made up of 13 administrators.

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FOCUS & THE NEED FOR PLANNING

With any major change there is an essential need for planning. Staff development implies even a greater need for planning because it focuses on changing the behaviors, practices, and customs of humans who have been acclimated to a rather "routine" oriented environment; the classroom. In our case, as with many small school districts, there were more barriers to contend with in approaching staff development. Our resources were not abundant and had to be used sparingly. Our staff was in the aging process, which inferred greater resistance to any dramatic change in their professional lives. Moreover, our School Board was not oriented towards developing people from within; their attitude seemed to imply that colleges and universities should complete this chore prior to our hiring the individual.

In the spring of 1985, our Superintendent began to develop, along with the Administrative Team, a long range plan entitled "A Plan for the 90's." The "Plan for the 90's" addressed both national trends and statewide (Nebraska) trends and issues evolving in public education. The "Plan" closed by specifying five distinct areas within our school district the Superintendent felt we should focus our energies and resources on for the next decade (1985-95). These areas were: Curriculum, Facilities, Home/School/Business Relationships, Budget, and Staff Development. The latter shall be the focus of this presentation.

A District Staff Development Team was organized to address this area designated by the Superintendent. The composition of the Team

was: three administrators representing the three levels of the system (one elementary principal, one junior high assistant principal, and one senior high assistant principal). The other half of the Staff Development Team was composed of one elementary teacher, one junior high teacher, and one senior high teacher.

The Staff Development Team was sent to several workshops in order to familiarize itself with the role of staff development in schools as well as to develop a plan of action for implementing a district-wide staff development program. This plan would be included in the Superintendent's "Plan for the 90's" after receiving approval from both the Administrative Team and the School Board.

After numerous work sessions and inservice activities the Staff Development Team began to formulate its action plan. The first step was to agree on a long-term goal statement. The statement had to address staff development for our District in the context of the next 10 years. After setting down a long term goal, our Team began discussing ideas and trends that we felt should be explored with the eventual aim at including them in our action plan. After lengthy discussions a number of these ideas were adopted as "critical elements" within the planning document for staff development.

Each "critical element" listed under staff development was accompanied by a set of objectives and work tasks that had to be completed by the Staff Development Team in order for the element to be implemented into the District. For example, the number one critical element identified our first year was:

"**Critical Element One** - The Madeline Hunter Instructional Theory Into Practice teaching model shall be utilized on a district-wide basis with special emphasis on skill refinement through follow-up in-service activities provided to trained staff members."

This was only one of eight critical elements identified by the Staff Development Team in its first year of existance.

Once the critical elements were agreed upon by the Staff Development Team, each element required an action plan for implementation. Most critical elements, because of their nature and scope could not be implemented within one school year. Consequently, the Staff Development Team found itself projecting out several years into the District's future plans for implementation of most elements.

Moreover, the Team quickly became immersed in the logistics of "change." An example of this theme can best be understood in the critical element previously stated regarding the Hunter Instructional model. The Team had projected out three (3) years in order to train our 200 teachers in the Basic Hunter Course. We had no person on staff that could provide the training, so we initially relied on consultants from our Educational Service Unit (ESU) to complete the initial training. After meeting with the ESU officials, Hunter Basic courses began to be offered on a regular basis to our teachers.

After the first year of training however, it became quite apparent to the Staff Development Team that several things needed to be addressed that had previously been overlooked. First, the Hunter Model by its nature is developmental and requires more than simply training teachers. Once trained, practice and use of the model had to

be encouraged by Staff Development. Secondly, our reliance on outside consultants to carry out the training would not meet the three (3) year time line we had set down for training our staff members. Moreover, when surveyed it was quite apparent that not all of our staff members took course work for the same reasons. Hence, there was a need to offer the initial training with various incentives attached and at various times throughout the year. Thirdly, our plan had emphasized the training of staff but had not dwelt on refining the skills of our administrators (outside their initial training). We viewed this as a major flaw because our principals would play such an important role in the coaching process.

Consequently, when planning took place on this critical element for the second year, a great deal of discussion focused on the aforementioned concerns. In order to address the developmental nature of Hunter, the Staff Development Team began to develop through its action plan an extensive series of follow-up activities relating to specific "pieces" of the Hunter Model. These follow-up activities would be offered during early release days in our District's calendar and be required for any teacher who had completed the Basic Hunter course. In addition to this maintenance activity, the Staff Development Team became interested in some type of collegial support for teachers who had become Hunter trained. Several members of the Staff Development Team were assigned this area to investigate and began to focus on Peer Coaching. From their investigation of various Peer Coaching programs throughout the United States, a Peer Coaching Program for Columbus evolved and was approved by the Administrative Team and School Board. The overall goal of the Peer Coaching Program

is to support, in a positive non-evaluative manner, our classroom teachers in their efforts to master the Hunter Model.

In order to address our over reliance on outside help in order to train our teachers in the Hunter Model, the Staff Development Team received permission to hire their own District ITIP Trainer. After recruiting, screening, and selecting our candidate, the Trainer was sent to a number of ITIP workshops. At the completion of the her education, she was required to teach a class of Basic Hunter under the supervision of our ESU consultants. Presently, the Basic Hunter class is offered for non-credit (but with pay) to members of our staff. The ITIP Trainer also is responsible for supervising and in-servicing our Peer Coaches. By using our ITIP Trainer in this manner, our Staff Development Team feels that we will be able to train all of our staff in Basic Hunter within the three year time period set down. Moreover, those teachers that have been trained are receiving constant follow-up from both the Trainer as well as our ESU consultants.

In order to address the needs of our administrators, the Staff Development Team took several approaches. First, we solicited help from our ESU in offering a series of practicums focusing on scripting and conferencing skills. Secondly, we met with the Administrative Team and received permission to require that one job target each year be related to Hunter (e.g. I will teach and will have video taped one lesson utilizing the Hunter Model). Thirdly, our Superintendent gave the Staff Development Team the authority to evaluate each principal annually in their performance area of staff development. Hunter topics are now presented (e.g. attrition) in a brief fashion periodically at monthly Administrative Team meetings.

As the reader can deduce, the planning function of any staff development effort is essential.

A SYSTEM OF IN-SERVICE

During its initial year of existance, it became apparent to the members of the Staff Development Team that a very large issue would be how to address the in-service needs of the District's staff. Like most districts our size, we had traditionally relied on our ESU's for the one day of in-service per year in which all teachers met at a centralized location and were given a menu of activities to select from. However, the Staff Development Team found this approach somewhat lacking in terms of where we wanted our staff to be a decade from now. In addition to the one day, we found various groups of teachers (e.g. ECRI reading teachers, a curriculum team, a grade level) being funneled to us in order to get their in-service needs fulfilled. It appeared that the longer the Staff Development Team was in existance, the greater the needs became for in-service by various groups within the school district. The nature of the requests ran an entire gambit in terms of quantity and level of sophistication. One individual might request an awareness program on critical thinking skills while a Gifted Education Curriculum Team might present to the Staff Development Team a five year program on in-servicing teachers in the area of differentiated curriculum. Besides feeling overwhelmed with requests, the Staff Development Team began to perceive a need for some type of control over the situation.

After a year of reacting to requests from others, the Staff Development Team began to formulate a model for in-service needs. The

constructs of the model were simple in terms of fulfilling needs. First, the model had to have the ability to capture those needs identified by staff as important. Secondly, the model should not eliminate anybody from requesting in-service. It was felt that this was an important attribute to any in-service model because it allowed all parties to input. However, the danger of this approach would be the fact that not all in-service needs could be fulfilled. Therefore, it would be imperative for the Staff Development Team to orientate the staff up front that not all needs would be fulfilled!! A third characteristic of the model would be a screening process in which needs were ranked in order of their importance. Since the Staff Development Team was composed of three (3) teachers and three (3) administrators, it was felt that this body would be able to filter through the needs and rank them in terms of their importance to the individual(s) and the school district. Of course, after the screening process the identified needs and rational for those choices had to meet the approval of the Administrative Team.

As well as functional characteristics of the in-service model, the Staff Development Team felt quite strongly regarding the philosophical premise of in-service. Traditionally, in-service had been a process by which minimal time use was suppose to have created substantial positive impact for teachers, and thus children of that particular school district. To the members of our Staff Development Team, this idea was somewhat antiquated when we took into consideration what we had learned about developing adult learners. Subsequently, the philosophy of in-servicing staff with the model we were developing took on the meaning that any and all in-service

activities we provided should not be "one shot efforts." Where possible, follow-up activities (or maintenance) should always be provided. A long range focus should always be considered when screening specific in-service needs. Although the Staff Development Team agreed that there were certainly worthwhile "awareness" activities, an essential element in the selection process should be how we can move from simple awareness through the learning process to actual internalization of the in-service need.

Once the inservice model had been designed by the Staff Development Team it was presented to the Administrative Team for approval. The model eventually went to the School Board for both approval and orientation of the Board Members. At the completion of these steps, each Staff Development Team member was assigned various school staffs to present the model to. Emphasis was placed on making all parties aware of the process in determining needs for in-service.

The ultimate effectiveness of the in-service model will not be known for some years. However, it is an attempt to gather as much input from as many people within the school district as possible, prior to allocating time, energy, and other resources of the District.

THE IN-SERVICE MODEL

In-service activities may vary in scope and depth depending on the desired outcome. A number of past in-service activities would be considered short-term in nature, with their emphasis being on information sharing or awareness building. Other in-service activities are of a long-term nature with emphasis on changing behaviors. These types of activities usually are developed in long-term context and involve a great deal of pre-planning. They may

be actualized over a period of years and generally infer district-wide change.

An example of a short-term activity might be the training for a new textbook adoption within the District. Generally, this type of in-service activity involves only those affected teachers and is a one shot activity. In contrast to a short-term activity, an instructional model (e.g. Hunter) might imply years of inservice activity in order to train teachers and have them internalize the necessary skills and knowledge needed to apply the elements of the model.

In summary, any in-service model must take into consideration each item or issue of both short-term and long-term nature.

A second consideration that an in-service model must address is the generation of in-service ideas. The model should be flexible enough to capture in-service ideas/suggestions from one individual as well as suggestions from a team of individuals (e.g. School Board, Administrative Team, CEA, a department, a grade level, a building).

Without the ability to capture all ideas/suggestions for in-service in the District, staff development will eventually take on a narrow focus. The danger in a narrow focus is the inability of in-service activities to reflect the needs of the entire school district. Another inherent danger in developing a model that captures input from the entire audience (all staff) is the fact that not all needs will be addressed. It is for this reason that staff members have to be made aware, up front, that **not all needs will be met**. Limited resources require the Staff Development Team to prioritize and eventually eliminate those needs that will only benefit a few, in contrast to the needs that will benefit the most.

In summary, the model must be flexible enough to capture all the preceived needs of the audience it serves. It must also take into consideration the principles of learning. The following chart graphically displays this element of the inservice model.

CHART NO. 1

ACTUALIZING THE NEED

(Progression depends on the desired outcome)

THE NEED IDENTIFIED

DEFINING THE LEARNING

PHASE I AWARENESS	PHASE II TRANSFER	PHASE III APPLICATION	PHASE IV REFINEMENT	PHASE V MASTERY
- large group setting - orientation	- small group setting - depth of content/ skills, etc.	- implementation, application - use of the learning	- individual monitors & adjusts	- individual internalizes and uses
→	→	→	→	- Actualization by each individual
- awareness	- the learning, knowledge new learning	- coaching facilitation of individuals	- verification of use	

Utilizing the display, one can plug any acceptable need into staff growth. Depending on the depth of the need, the progression of the learning horizontally can lead all the way to mastery. The mastery level would be self-actualization, meaning that each individual being exposed to the entire progression for a specific need will have internalized the learning and is utilizing it at the classroom level.

To summarize, once a need is adopted and the depth of the learning defined, the in-service model must provide the phases of learning in order to obtain the desired outcome.

In conclusion, an in-service model should contain three essential elements in order to be effective. First, the model should allow for both short and long-term needs. Second, the model must be flexible enough to capture all preceived needs by both individual staff members, as well as groups of staff members. Third, the in-service model should provide, depending on the desired outcome, for a continuum of learning from awareness to the mastery.

THE SCOPE OF NEEDS

Needs come in all shapes and sizes. Some are perceived needs by indiviudals within the organization, others appear to be organizational needs generated by the dynamics of the environment, in which the organization functions. No matter what its size or shape, a need is important and valued by its originator(s). Once a need is identified, the "degree of concern" raises within that person or persons who created the need. This is a basic precept associated with needs.

The function of the Staff Development Team when addressing in-service is to decipher and sift through generated needs. This process requires that the Staff Development Team exhibits several traits:

1. Be knowledgeable regarding the direction the District is moving in all areas.
2. Be selective in prioritizing the various needs brought forth.
3. Be able to defend the selection of one need over another.
4. Make maximum use of the resources allocated it in order to meet as many needs as possible.
5. Publish to all staff members the final selection of needs and provide a logical defense for the selection of each need.

Once the Staff Development Team has gathered and prioritized the needs of the District, each need must be categorized into short-term and long-term modes. Discussions must focus on such items as:

1. Is the need short-term in its nature <u>or</u> long-term? Determine approximate time line for completion.
2. What is the desired outcome of implementing the need?
3. How many staff members will be affected?
4. Where does this need fit into the long range plan?
5. What types of resources will be required to fulfill this need?

ABILITY OF THE MODEL TO CAPTURE NEEDS

The ability of the model to capture needs will be a critical element. This ability should have a number of avenues. The traditional needs assessment allows for input by all but has drawbacks in terms of immediacy. Needs assessments completed on an annual basis do not always reflect those needs that arise after its completion. In contrast, immediate input of needs by individuals do not always represent a total picture projected by a needs assessment. However, the need that might arise in a quick manner, can be as legitimate as those derived from a thorough needs assessment.

Consequently, the model should provide enough avenues for all staff to have input. Accessing the model by all parties and audiences is extremely important. The Staff Development Team, through the application of its criteria (e.g. those objectives set down in the "Plan for the 90's"), will act as the screening device. Such audiences requesting in-service might include the following in any given school year.

CHART NO. 2: POSSIBLE INPUT AUDIENCES

* A Teacher (or group)	* Grade level	* Administrative Team
* Department	* PAC/PTA's	* Classified Staff
* Building	* School Board	* Counselors
* P.R. Coordinator	* CEA	* Peer Coaches
* Principals	* Curriculum Team	* Secondary Staff
* Superintendent	* Evaluation Team	* Elementary Staff
* Ad Hoc Teams	* School Psychologists	* Asst. Superintendent

Either collectively, in concert with a number of others, or individually the above audiences should be able to suggest needs to Staff Development through the inservice model.

TYPE OF IN-SERVICE NEEDED

It should be the responsibility of the Staff Development Team to determine the type of in-service needed by the requesting audience. Several factors should weigh in the decision regarding the types of in-service to be applied to an identified need.

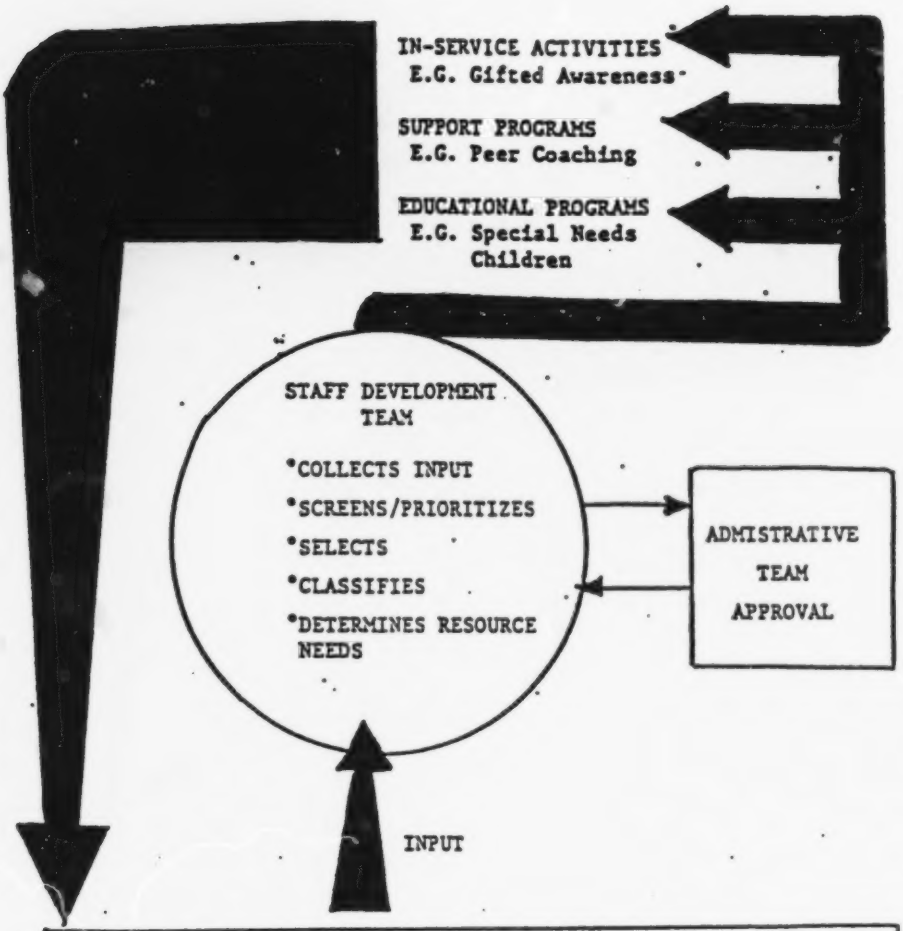
First, the nature of the in-service must be determined. Orientation or awareness infers less resource usage than a long-term skills development need for the entire staff.

Second, as the need surfaces, those people who are recommending the in-service activities should be able to project out in written form the following information:

1. A stated rationale by an indiviudal or consensus by a group for the in-service.
2. A preliminary plan regarding the in-service activities needed. (e.g. possible resource people, suggested time line, intent of in-service, staff involved)
3. A statement addressing the immediacy of the need.

As the Staff Development Team reviews this information generated by groups and individuals, the classification process would begin. Resource allocations would be dictated annually by the types of requests made to the Staff Development Team.

IN-SERVICE MODEL



A Teacher	Classified Staff
A Group of Teachers	Counselors
A Department	P.R. Coordinator
A Building	Peer Coaches
A Grade Level	Elementary Principals
PACs/ PTA's	Superintendent
School Board	Elementary Staff
Administrative Team	Secondary Staff
A Principal	Assistant Superintendent
	Etc.

THE STAFF DEVELOPMENT TEAM'S RESPONSIBILITIES

* Collects Needs (input) Annually
* Screens & Prioritizes Needs
* Selects Needs
* Classifies Needs
* Determines Resource Allocations
* Receives Approval
* Plans Activities
* Schedules/Calendars Activities/Creates Target Dates

CREATING SOLUTIONS

Setting a future direction through planning and establishing the basic needs of an organization appear to be primary missions for successful staff development programs. However, within our School District certain unique (in some cases, not so unique) problems surfaced that demanded attention. Possibly these problems arose because our Staff Development Team was composed of both administrators and teachers which facilitated dialogue that might never have transpired without such representation. Or possibly, the problems would have naturally been identified by others at a later time. For whatever reason, the Staff Development Team in its second year of existance began to discuss certain needs that did not come through specific channels or from a particular audience. One such item dealt with our new staff members. More specifically, the new teacher starting out in the profession for the first time.

There was a unanious feeling on the part of all members of the Staff Development Team that outside the first day orientation for new teachers, this inexperienced group of people did not receive a great deal of support from the school system. In fact, most Staff Development Team members felt that the success (or failure) of these individuals was pretty well left up to fate. In discussions with our principals, it was apparent that these new staff members were considered extremely important. However, only a loose "buddy system" existed in order to support their assimilation into our schools. Little, and some cases no, effort was made to aid the new teacher in assimilating into our community, although if they requested it, a number of central office figures helped them to obtain housing, etc.

Professional needs were not addressed in any depth. Such rudimentary needs as finding books, understanding forms, specific procedures in the school day were discussed; but, such issues as the District's expectations for teachers, curricular issues, student achievement and the teacher, student support programs, the instructional model, etc. were simply expected to be picked up through osmosis and the socialization process that new staff members go through in their initial years.

Once the problem had been identified, several members of the Staff Development Team were assigned to gather information from other school districts on how they were solving this problem of assimilation. Because of our size, most of the materials and/or programs dealing with this issue had to be obtained from much larger districts throughout the United States. After collecting information and ideas from others, these Team members began to develop a program designed for new staff members, and more specifically first year teachers within our school district. Through analyzing materials and discussions with other districts, a program was formulated uniquely tailored for our District. Once the first draft was completed it was presented to the Staff Development Team as a whole. Upon revision, the program was adopted and taken to the Administrative Team for approval. Ultimately the "Early Entry Assistance Program & District Mentor" program was presented to our School Board for its approval (see attachment).

Although the School Board did not approve "The Early Entry Assistance" program, there still exists among members of the Staff Development Team a rather strong feeling that we were attempting to

solve, in a rather creative manner, a specific need that we had uncovered. As part of our action plan for the present school year, the Staff Development Team has decided to take this program back to the School Board in order to try, once again, to gain its approval.

CONCLUSION

The staff development process in the Columbus School System is presently at a stage of infancy. Each year the Staff Development Team matures in terms of its role and its appreciation towards the complexity of "change." I believe the six members would agree that several factors have given us a rather unique opportunity to serve our colleagues.

First, the process began and continues to emphasize planning. Through the planning process, we have all developed a district-wide focus which directs our energies in a pro-active way towards our Distict's future, not solely a reactive posture to present day stimulus. Thus, a vision into our District's future has emerged from the planning process.

Second, a system has been developed to capture needs (In-Service Model). Although not all needs will be addressed, the Staff Development Team will at least be able to view all needs. This system of in-service will insure that as our school district moves into uncharted waters, each person has the ability to voice his or her concerns, needs, and opinions.

Third, and possibly the most important ingredient to our staff development program, is the attempt to come up with creative solutions to problems within our District, whether that be an agreed upon need

by the Staff Development Team that our young teachers need more nuturing or simply what future areas should be explored. Presently we have lead teams or individuals investigating such programs as: Out-come Based Education, TACTICs (a Critical Thinking Program), 4-MAT (Learning Styles), Cooperative Learning, etc. These District trainers and resource people will return to our District and share with the Staff Development Team, as well as the other decision-makers, future direction for our School District.

As a small school district, the teaming concept appears to be a very viable approach towards delivering a quality staff development program to teachers. There are a number of "spin-offs" that give the "team concept" particular advantages over the more traditional central office staffing approach. One such spin-off is the enhancement of communications regarding staff development issues at all levels (elementary, secondary) of our school district. Primarily, this increase in communications is derived directly from representatives of the Staff Development Team coming from various levels and buildings. Still another positive spin-off would be the direct involvement the teaming concept provides to staff members. With Staff Development Team members working on a daily basis within the school buidlings there is a much greater chance that other staff members will voice opinions and become involved in their own destinies. Finally, an equal representation of teachers and administrators on the Staff Development Team sends a very strong signal to all that the process is an inferred partnership in growth and not solely the responsibility of management to direct the growth of teachers.

ATTACHMENT

The Early Entry Assistance Program & The District Mentor

Program Descriptor

THE EARLY ENTRY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM & THE DISTRICT MENTOR PROGRAM DESCRIPTOR

BELIEF: "Each time a teacher is hired, the school and its district have an opportunity to improve the instructional program."

MISSION: Our new teachers are an extremely valuable resource. They will have an influence on the children of this community for decades. For this reason, it is imperative that their initial experience in the Columbus City Schools is a secure and successful one.

GOAL: To develop a program that enhances the probabilities of a successful initial teaching experience within the Columbus City Schools for new employees.

Objective #1: To create a mentor who will aid the new employee simulate into the Columbus School District.

Objective #2: To take into consideration that assimilation into the Columbus City Schools involves the socialization of the new employee and his family into the school and community at large.

Objective #3: To aid the new employee in better understanding the formal as well as informal customs, practices and procedures of the organization.

Objective #4: To facilitate the new employee in problem-solving and conflict-resolution when or if the need arises.

Objective #5: To create a clear set of expectations within the area of instructional skills which the probationary employee is to fulfill and build on.

The Early Entry Assistance Program is a facilitating program. Its base is founded on the precept that new employees are a long-term resource to our school district. Because of this precept, it becomes imperative that the District apply as many strategies as possible to ensure that the new employee meets with both a secure environment and successful "initial" teaching experience.

The program emphasizes several very important segments of the new employee's work life in the District. A carefully selected District Mentor (to be discussed later in detail) helps the new employee and family simulate into both the external community as well as school. With the aid of the building principal, the District Mentor guides, directs and facilitates the professional growth of the new employee during his/her initial year. The ITIP Trainer will become involved in

training the new staff member in the use of the District's approved instructional model. Moreover, an ITIP Peer Coach will help the new employee in building the necessary skills needed to utilize ITIP in the new employee's classroom.

The role of the building principal would not change drastically from the traditional role played in the past. However, it is perceived with the initial help of a District Mentor and eventual aid from the ITIP Trainer and Peer Coach, the building principal would have a great deal more support staff to aid in making a new employee's initial experience a successful one.

THE DISTRICT MENTOR

The District Mentor is a critical element to a successful Early Entry Assistance Program. The Mentor will be the first colleague the new employee meets. Many of the initial questions that a new employee has will be answered by the District Mentor. The tone of the new employee's initial work life in the District will be set by the Mentor. He/She (the Mentor) will be one of the first individuals representing the school that the new employee's family will meet. For these reasons, plus many more, the District Mentor's role is crucial.

What are the characteristics the District should look for in a Mentor? The following represent some personal traits this individual should possess.

Personal Traits of a District Mentor

* An exhibited ability to work with adults
* An exhibited ability to communicate with others
* Strong people perceptions (e.g. able to identify needs, concerns of an individual)
* A high degree of empathy towards others
* Extremely high degree of interpersonal relationship skills (e.g. feeling tone, caring, sense of humor, high degree of concern, etc.)
* Ability to lead people (e.g. planning skills evident, goal setting, interpreting strengths and weaknesses of an individual, counselling, etc.)

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THE DISTRICT MENTOR?

The primary mission of the district Mentor Program is to see that each new teacher assimulates into the Columbus City Schools in the most fluent manner possible. This mission infers that the Mentor's major efforts with the the new employee will transpire in the employee's initial year of employment. Hopefully, this relationship will continue throughout the new employee's tenure with the school district. However, it is quite apparent that the initial phase of

employment (year one) is critical in the professional career of the novice teacher.

The Mentor Program cannot be a "hit and miss" affair. It must have a planned strategy that is implemented in a complete fashion. Otherwise, the system will have a sporadic outcome, no better (or worse) than simply asking a tenured employee to help a new employee throughout his/her first year which is basically what transpires presently.

Upon the offer to hire the new employee by the building principal, several tasks should be completed by the District Mentor. They focus on the area of orientation. The following represent a number of these tasks, but should not be considered all inclusive.

ORIENTATION REGARDING SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

1. A letter of introduction and welcome should be sent to the new employee by his/her Mentor that parallels the principal's offer of employment. This letter should include such information as:
   (a) Congratulatory remarks
   (b) A brief explanation of the Early Entry Assistance Program
   (c) The purpose of Mentor's role
   (d) The Mentor's address, phone number, etc.
   (e) An invitation to meet with the new employee

2. Once the Mentor has established contact a tour of the community, as well as the schools, is in order. This tour should include the immediate family of the new employee and include information regarding housing, etc. within Columbus.

3. The Mentor should, with the aid of the building principal, arrange a number of initial meetings* for his/her new employee.
   (a) Initial meeting with the building principal (e.g. Chamber luncheons).
   (b) Initial meeting with the Assistant Superintendent regarding forms, leaves, certificate validation, etc.
   (c) Initial introductions of the new employee at the opening (K-12) staff meeting.
   (d) Introductions to the grade level/departmental teachers who will be working closely with the new employee.

   * It should be understood that the Mentor will attend these meetings along with his/her new co-worker.

ASSIMILATION INTO THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

1. The Mentor is expected to develop a "working" relationship with the new employee. This implies more

than just a casual relationship with novice. Such things as:
(a) Regular communications.
(b) Listening and then reacting to the needs of the new employee.
(c) Acting as a link between the new employee and others (e.g. building principal) should be included in this working relationship.

2. Relating expectations of both the District, as well as the building, to the new employee in a positive manner.

3. Participate (actively) in any conflict resolution or crisis situations that might involve the new employee.

4. Meeting weekly with the employee to discuss problems, activities, issues and concerns.

5. Helping the new teacher make the proper contacts needed to carry out his/her duties, get answers to questions, etc.

6. Report periodically (at least once a quarter) to the building principal in order to explain the progress, problems, etc. of the new employee.

7. Relating the various customs, practices, and procedures of the building to the new teacher in a positive manner.

8. Helping the new employee solve student management problems or offering contacts who can aid the novice.

The District Mentor is directly responsible to his/her building principal. Problems, issues, etc. dealing with the new employee are expected to be brought to the building principal by the Mentor. Moreover, a portion of the evaluation regarding the effectiveness of the Mentor, is to be completed by the building principal. The Mentor is also expected to help the new employee develop his/her professional growth plan, as well as the initial job targets.

A transfer of dominance regarding the Mentor's role in the Early Entry Assistance Program moves to the Peer Coach during the second year of the new teacher's employment. After the initial Basic Hunter course is completed by the novice, the Peer Coach becomes the major support among district personnel until the novice is granted tenure.

The principal's role in the Early Entry Assistance Program would not change much from the traditional role played in the past. However, it is perceived that with this program, the principal would have two more resource people to utilize in developing the young teacher.

Program objectives for the Early Entry Assistance Program are as follows:

1.0 At the completion of the selection process by the building principal, a District Mentor shall be assigned to the new teacher.

1.1 Both written communication (letter) and verbal communication (phone call) shall be made by the District Mentor to the new teacher upon notification of his/her assignment by the building principal.

1.2 The District Mentor shall be responsible for giving the new teacher (and spouse) an orientation and tour of the community and aid in any way possible their placement in the community.

1.3 Above and beyond the new teachers' orientation by the building principal, the District Mentor shall be responsible to aid the new teacher's simulation through activities such as staff introductions, etc.

1.4 The District Mentor shall meet with the new teacher on at least a weekly basis for the purpose of: socializing, answering questions that might have arisen during the week, solving any problems, giving advice, etc.

2.0 The District Mentor shall work as a facilitator for the building principal and new teacher.

2.1 The District Mentor shall work with the new teacher on identified areas of weakness as stated by the principal.

2.2 The District Mentor shall work with the new teacher in his/her classroom at least 1 day per semester offering aid and advice based on his/her observations.

2.3 The District Mentor shall post-conference the new teacher regarding a plan for improvement based on the results of the evaluation conference with the building principal.

2.4 The District Mentor shall help arrange for the new teacher's Hunter training during the latter part of the first year of employment.

2.5 The District Mentor shall, with the building principal, help develop an improvement plan involving Hunter Training, job target selection, student management skills, etc.

2.6 The District Mentor shall arrange for the Peer Coach to work with the new employee and discuss Peer Coach responsibilities.

2.7 The District Mentor shall help the new teacher plan follow-up activities needed for fulfilling the instructional model.

COST

Program cost may vary based on two variables: (1) the number of new or beginning teachers hired each year, and (2) the number of beginning teachers in this pool. A review of the District's turnover rate for the last 5 years would indicate the number of new and beginning teachers to be between 6-10 teachers annually.

Mentor's Annual Stipend

Beginning Teachers	=	$500.00
New Teachers	=	$250.00

Beginning Teacher -- New to the District with no prior experience

New Teacher -- New to the District with some prior experience

Note: The program does not include those teachers returning to the District.

To be filled out by the new employee

MENTOR EVALUATION
- Confidential -

1. Do you feel that your Mentor was a valuable resource for your successful entry into the District? YES NO

2. Did your Mentor initially give you an orientation of the school district and building? YES NO

3. Was your Mentor helpful in getting your family adjusted to this community? YES NO

4. Did your Mentor meet with you on a: daily basis YES NO

   weekly basis YES NO

   monthly basis YES NO

5. Was your Mentor helpful in improving or suggesting improvement in your classroom duties? YES NO

6. When problems arose during this school year, did your Mentor help you to resolve them? YES NO

7. Did your Mentor help you make contact with people you needed to see during this school year? YES NO

8. Did you ever have the opportunity to interact with your Mentor on a social basis this year? YES NO

9. Did your Mentor give you "good insight" into building procedures, customs, etc. that you would have normally had to learn on your own? YES NO

10. Please offer any suggestions you feel might improve the Mentor Program:

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Please return this form to your principal)

To be filled out by the building principal regarding Dis. Mentor

School Year _____

PRINCIPAL'S PERCEPTION OF THE MENTOR

PART I

1. Element: Exhibited ability to work with the new employee. (Circle)

(Low) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (High)

Comments: _____

_____

_____

2. Element: Exhibited ability to communicate with new employee and principal. (Circle)

(Low) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (High)

Comments: _____

_____

_____

3. Element: Demonstrates strong people perceptions (e.g. able to identify needs.

(Low) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (High)

Comments: _____

_____

_____

4. Element: Demonstrates a high degree of empathy towards new employee (e.g. listens to employee, helps employee with problems, follow-up regarding solutions, etc.) (Circle)

(Low) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (High)

Comments: _____

_____

_____

5. Element: Exhibits a high degree of interpersonal relationship skill with the new employee (e.g. strong feeling tone, caring attitude, sense of humor with employee, etc.). (Circle)

(Low) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (High)

Comments: _____

_____

_____

6. Element: Demonstrates ability to lead and direct new employee (e.g. able to counsel with new employee, helps set goals for new employee, able to identify strengths and weaknesses of the new employee, etc.). (Circle)

(Low) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (High)

Comments: _____

_____

_____

PART II

1. Do you feel this Mentor developed a working relationship with the new teacher? YES NO

(Other)_____

_____

2. Did the Mentor spend a minimum of 1 day/semester in class with the new teacher? YES NO

(Other)_____

_____

3. In your discussions with the Mentor this past year, did the Mentor exhibit a good insight of the new teacher? YES NO

(Other)_____

_____

4. Would you consider this Mentor an "advocate" for this new teacher? YES NO

(Other)_____

_____

5. Did this Mentor meet with you periodically to update you regarding the progress of the new teacher? YES NO

(Other)_____

_____

(Please turn this completed form over to the Staff Development Team)

x